



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 31 March 2009

Current Nationwide
Threat Level is



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- KTVT 11 Fort Worth reports that residents in the Ellis County, Texas town of Avalon evacuated their homes late Sunday after a fire inside a storage warehouse at the nearby PSC chemical plant. (See item [4](#))
- According to IDG News Service, a security researcher at Symantec said that the March 26 disclosure of the GhostNet cyberespionage ring that targeted 1,295 computers in more than 100 countries underscores how highly targeted and sophisticated attacks are changing the security landscape. (See item [27](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report Fast Jump

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Service Industries: [Banking and Finance](#); [Transportation](#); [Postal and Shipping](#); [Information Technology](#); [Communications](#); [Commercial Facilities](#)

Sustenance and Health: [Agriculture and Food](#); [Water](#); [Public Health and Healthcare](#)

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: **Physical**: ELEVATED, **Cyber**: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *March 30, Reuters* – (International) **Oil spill spotted in Finnish Baltic.** A slick of light fuel oil dozens of miles long has been found in the Baltic archipelago in southwestern Finland, officials said on March 30. The division head of the Finnish Rescue Services said ship traffic was the likely source given the slick's location in shipping lanes stretching from the harbor of Naantali to the Aland Islands. "The oil is in the ice, but it has not hit shore yet," the division head said, adding that the lightness of the oil grade should help once a clean-up begins. He also said sunshine should help to make it evaporate. A spokesman for the coast guard said the service would make a surveillance flight later in the morning to assess the situation.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssEnergyNews/idUSLU13168020090330>

2. *March 30, Associated Press* – (Massachusetts) **Residents near Mass. explosion demand answers.** Residents of a Somerset neighborhood where a natural gas explosion killed a woman are demanding that the gas company test all pipes in the area. A man who lives on a street near the site of the New York Avenue explosion last month tells the Herald News of Fall River that neighbors are signing a petition that he hopes will be presented to the state Department of Public Utilities. He says the neighbors want all pipes within a 1-mile radius of the explosion to be tested and replaced if necessary. Some of the pipes are more than 50 years old. He says New England Gas Co. has been unresponsive to neighborhood concerns.

Source: <http://www.wten.com/Global/story.asp?S=10093490>

3. *March 29, Anchorage Daily News* – (Alaska) **Oil at Drift River poses a spill risk.** Though the Drift River oil terminal has so far withstood everything thrown at it by Redoubt volcano over the last eight days, officials and environmental watchdogs remain concerned about the 6 million gallons of crude still in storage there. Over the weekend, Chevron, the operator of the terminal, and state and federal regulators agreed to set up a joint emergency command to monitor events and also to be able to move quickly in the event of a disaster, said a state oil-spill prevention official in Juneau. He said on March 29 that one of the first tasks for the team is to decide whether to stage extra emergency response equipment in anticipation of a spill. An overflight of the terminal on March 28 showed that no water had penetrated the dike built to protect the facility after the 1989-1990 Redoubt eruptions, said the spill-prevention program manager with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The flight, of DEC and Coast Guard officials, showed the river had abandoned its older normal channel east of the terminal and moved into another on the west side. That is better news for the tanks, he said, but the river, running through braided channels in its plain, can be expected to shift unpredictably at any time when it is in flood stage, he said.

Source: <http://www.adn.com/volcano/story/741009.html>

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Chemical Industry Sector

4. *March 29, KTVT 11 Fort Worth* – (Texas) **Fire at Ellis County chemical plant.** Residents living in the Ellis County town of Avalon evacuated their homes late on March 29 after a fire at a nearby chemical plant. Hazardous material crews spent March 29 cleaning up after the fire. Authorities asked people living in a 1 mile radius around the plant to stay away from their homes until cleanup was complete. The fire was located inside a storage warehouse at the PSC chemical plant in Avalon. Fire officials in Avalon say even though the fire was out, there was concern over fumes from the smoldering fire. The fire is believed to have been caused by an electrical malfunction. It is unknown what chemical burned in the fire.

Source: <http://cbs11tv.com/local/ellis.county.avalon.2.971034.html>

5. *March 28, New York Times* – (West Virginia) **Trying to limit disclosure on explosion.**

In August 2008, an explosion tore through the Bayer CropScience Chemical Plant in Institute, West Virginia, killing two employees. Now, a federal agency wants to hold a public hearing to lay out its preliminary findings about what caused the accident. But Bayer, citing a terrorism-related federal law, is trying to limit what the agency can disclose. Bayer is contending that because it has a dock for barge shipments on the adjacent Kanawha River, its entire 400-acre site qualifies under the 2002 federal Maritime Transportation Security Act. It has asked the Coast Guard, which has jurisdiction under the act, to review the public release of “sensitive security information.” The agency that wants to hold the hearing, the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, says it is the first time in its 11 years of operation that a company has tried to limit what could be discussed publicly, and the first time the maritime act has been invoked this way. In particular, Bayer appears to want to limit discussion about the potential hazards posed by a chemical produced and used by the plant — methyl isocyanate. The chemical safety board believes that if Bayer is successful, it will set a precedent for other companies to limit the release of information. But the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation board chairman contended that the maritime act applied only to transportation of the chemicals, not the onsite storage and processes.

Source: http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/29/us/29chemical.html?_r=1&ref=earth

6. *March 28, Galveston Daily News* – (Texas) **Chemical spill shuts Highway 96.** State Highway 96 in League City was shut down for about two hours after a chemical spill, police said. The heavily congested highway was closed from state Highway 3 to Calder Road. A small amount of toluene, an octane booster used for gasoline, had spilled on the highway near Walker Street. A police spokesman said the leak happened after the pickup that was carrying the substance collided with another vehicle at the intersection. No one was harmed by the substance, and the roadway opened to traffic in the evening. Source: <http://galvestondailynews.com/story.lasso?ewcd=7e572e4a72f5dd52>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

7. *March 30, Reuters* – (Michigan) **DTE shut Mich. Fermi 2 reactor for vibrations & refuel.** DTE Energy Co. shut the 1,122-megawatt Unit 2 at the Fermi power station in Monroe County, Michigan on March 28 due to high vibration on a main turbine bearing as it was preparing to shut for refueling, the company told the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in a report. The company said it was investigating the cause of the high turbine vibrations. Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssIndustryMaterialsUtilitiesNews/idUSN3032666220090330>
8. *March 28, Brattleboro Reformer* – (Vermont) **Temporary fix stops leaky valve at Vermont Yankee.** A leak in a valve in a steam line at Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant was finally sealed the afternoon of March 25. The fix, which involved injecting a sealant inside a clamp around the valve, is only temporary. The valve will be fixed when

the plant undergoes its next refueling outage in 2010. “You may recall that Entergy three times before clamped the valve and injected leak repair material, but it did not work,” said a spokesman for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The valve is located in the reactor water cleanup system, which was out of service temporarily while the repair work was conducted, he said. “The company is continuing to monitor the valve to ensure that the repair is working.” The valve had been leaking about 3,600 gallons of water a day since the leak was discovered in early January. “A closed circuit camera is now installed at the valve to enable technicians to ensure valve remains sealed,” said a spokesman for Vermont Yankee. “At our next refueling outage, we will repair or replace the valve so that the sealant will not be needed.” None of the leaking water left the reactor containment system, said the Vermont Yankee spokesman, and had been recirculated in the system.

Source: http://www.reformer.com/ci_12017658

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

9. *March 27, Aviation Week* – (National) **DoD acquisition workforce insufficient.** The Defense Department (DoD) is facing critical gaps in its acquisition work force, potentially affecting its national security mission, according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). Released March 25, GAO’s report assesses DoD’s ability to determine whether it has a sufficient acquisition work force, initiatives to improve and manage oversight of its existing work force, and best practices that could help DoD make positive changes. In its analysis of key DoD studies, data from 66 major weapons systems program offices and interviews with officials from four program offices, GAO discovered numerous challenges facing the department. The Pentagon does not collect or track information on contractor personnel, GAO found. Nor does it have enough information on why contractor personnel are used in certain situations. DoD also lacks key pieces of information on the use and skill sets of its contractors, which leaves the department unable to identify gaps in its acquisition work force. GAO is recommending several fixes to the problem, including the collection of data on contractor personnel. DoD only partially concurred with that suggestion, agreeing that the information is necessary to improve acquisition work force planning, but warning that the process is a much larger and more intricate undertaking than GAO suggests. In January 2009, DoD chartered the Defense Acquisition Workforce Joint Assessment Team (JAT) to improve identification of the acquisition work force, including contractor support. DoD is waiting on JAT’s recommendations before moving forward with any data collection programs.

Source:

<http://www.military.com/features/0,15240,187701,00.html?ESRC=topstories.RSS>

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Banking and Finance Sector

10. *March 29, KCRG 9 Cedar Rapids* – (Iowa) **Dubuque police warn of phone scam.** The Dubuque Police Department is warning of a telephone scam that took place on March

29. The Dubuque County Emergency 911 Dispatch Center has been inundated with calls/inquiries from citizens concerning telephone calls they have received about their credit card information being compromised. When the call is answered, a recording is played purporting to be DuTrac Community Credit Union. The recording states the person's credit card information has been compromised and they are instructed to "press 1" for the "security department," then they are instructed to enter their credit card information and personal identification number (PIN). Dubuque police contacted DuTrac concerning the inquiries and have learned the calls are not affiliated with DuTrac Community Credit Union in any way. The calls are a fraudulent attempt to acquire the call recipient's credit card information. People are instructed to hang up as soon as they identify this type of phone call and are reminded to never provide personal financial information over the phone.

Source: <http://www.kcrg.com/news/local/42089042.html>

11. *March 28, Los Angeles Times* – (California) **FDIC orders changes at six California banks.** Revealing the recession's rising toll on financial firms, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) disclosed on March 27 that it had ordered six more California banks to clean up their acts in February after the agency examined their books and operations. The banks — two in Los Angeles County, two in Riverside County, and one each in Stockton and La Jolla — received "cease and desist" orders that spell out publicly what the banks must do, such as boost capital levels, beef up management, and rein in risky loans. The number of such regulatory actions has been increasing rapidly. The FDIC, a primary regulator of many state-chartered banks as well as the guardian of federally insured deposits, has announced 10 public enforcement actions against California banks and bankers in the first two months of this year, compared with 24 in all of 2008 and no more than seven in each of the preceding three years. By the end of 2009, two-thirds of the state's banks will be operating under cease-and-desist orders or other regulatory actions, an Anaheim-based banking consultant predicts. Most banks targeted in such actions eventually tighten up operations and continue in business or merge with stronger institutions, but regulators are preparing for a major wave of failures.

Source: <http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-banks28-2009mar28,0,2513212.story>

12. *March 27, Tampa Bay Business Journal* – (Florida) **Omni National Bank taken over by FDIC.** The FDIC has taken over as receiver for Atlanta-based Omni National Bank, which was battered by rising losses stemming from souring real estate loans. Omni has one location in Tampa. As of June 30, the bank had \$32.4 million in deposits locally, according to the most recent information from the FDIC. The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency on March 27 made the announcement, saying the \$980 million-asset bank had "experienced substantial dissipation of assets and earnings" because of "unsafe and unsound" practices. OCC also said the bank "incurred losses that have depleted most of its capital, and there is no reasonable prospect that the bank will become adequately capitalized without federal assistance." The bank's holding company Omni Financial Services Inc. was put under a regulatory oversight plan by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta on March 17.

Source: <http://www.bizjournals.com/tampabay/stories/2009/03/23/daily62.html>

Transportation Sector

13. *March 30, Associated Press* – (California) **Airliner returns to San Diego after smoke report.** An American Airlines jet safely returned to San Diego's airport shortly after takeoff when the pilot reported smoke in the cockpit. Officials from the airline and the Federal Aviation Administration say the Dallas-bound MD-80 jet took off at 6:19 p.m. March 29 and turned around 17 minutes later. It landed safely back in San Diego at 6:45 p.m. None of the plane's 146 passengers was injured. Dozens of firefighters were waiting for the plane when it returned. After an examination of the plane that included the use of thermal imaging tools, they found no fire or any related problems. The passengers eventually arrived in Dallas about two hours later than scheduled, according to the American Airlines Web site.

Source:

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5iC6JAGKcBjRO0Yhij9FBUIJP5sPQD9787VCG2>

March 30, Associated Press – (Colorado) **Altercation diverts Southwest flight to Denver.** A Southwest Airlines flight from Phoenix to Detroit was diverted to Denver after a woman was involved in an altercation with another passenger. An airline spokesman says he does not have details on what happened on Flight 1402 on March 28, but he says he does not know of any injuries. He says the flight was on the ground in Denver about 30 minutes while the woman was removed from the flight and turned over to authorities. The flight then headed to Detroit. There were 137 people on board. Denver police could not immediately be reached on March 29 for comment on whether the woman faces charges. Her name was not released.

Source: [http://www.examiner.com/a-](http://www.examiner.com/a-1932303~Altercation_diverts_Southwest_flight_to_Denver.html)

[1932303~Altercation diverts Southwest flight to Denver.html](http://www.examiner.com/a-1932303~Altercation_diverts_Southwest_flight_to_Denver.html)

14. *March 28, CBS News and Associated Press* – (National) **Blizzard paralyzes Midwest.** Parts of the Southern plains woke up Saturday morning to a blizzard that left roads closed and hundreds of travelers stranded. The governor of Oklahoma declared a state of emergency for much of the state. "Ice and snow resulting from this winter storm poses serious challenges to everything from roads to power lines, and so it is critical that we be prepared for the worst," he said. In Kansas, heavy snow and winds of 40 mph closed roads as the storm system headed east. Ice was building up all over southeast Kansas before being replaced by snow. The Kansas Department of Transportation said numerous roads were closed, mostly in hard-hit southwest Kansas. At Denver International Airport, things were getting back to normal after intense spring storms created havoc conditions in Colorado one day earlier, forcing flight cancellations and road closings. A spring blizzard slammed into the Texas Panhandle, shutting down major highways and paralyzing the region in which snow drifts as high as 20 feet were spotted. Nearly all flights were cancelled at the airport in Amarillo, Texas. A spring storm dumped heavy rains, baseball-sized hail, and whipped up winds across the Southeast on Saturday, flooding homes and cars in parts of Mississippi and Alabama. About 100 roads in southern Mississippi were impassable because of the flooding,

including the main route into Biloxi, the Harrison County emergency management director said.

Source: <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/03/28/national/main4899464.shtml>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to report

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Agriculture and Food Sector

15. *March 27, WMTW 8 Portland* – (National) **Report: Fishy practices mar seafood industry.** A new report released in March said fraud in the seafood industry is ripping off consumers and that poor government oversight is putting the public's health at risk. The report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) said the seafood fraud runs the gamut from large-scale multinational schemes to simple scams at local grocery stores. The new report said the fraud can occur at any point along the vast global supply chain. It said that, ultimately, the fish shoppers buy at their local markets may not be what they think it is. "This isn't a dollar and cents issue alone, though," said a spokesperson for the National Fisheries Institute. "If a business is willing to defraud its customers, then it's more likely to be willing to cut corners in the area of food safety." The GAO said Americans consume more than 5 billion pounds of seafood every year, 80 percent of which comes from abroad. The report blamed the problem on a lack of adequate oversight and collaboration between regulatory agencies like the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Department of Commerce. While the FDA would not comment specifically on the report, a representative said the agency lacks the resources to make combating seafood fraud a higher priority. The FDA said to avoid buying bogus seafood products, consumers should buy only from reputable dealers and be wary of unusual bargains. A U.S. Senator from Maine said she is working on legislation to address the findings in the report, including proper species identification, labeling, and other fraud risks that can impact consumer health.

Source: <http://www.wmtw.com/news/19031923/detail.html>

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Water Sector

16. *March 29, St. Petersburg Times* – (Florida) **Fourth sewage gusher in Town 'N Country stumps water agency.** In Town 'N Country, Hillsborough County, the sewage pipe on Comanche Avenue between Hanley Road and Sweetwater Creek has ruptured and been repaired three times in seven months, with the latest repair on March 25. The fourth break, which began at 11:40 a.m. March 28, was shut off at 1:40 p.m. Testing has found no integrity problems with the 20-inch pipe or the engineering, said a spokeswoman for the county's Water Resource Services. She said the investigation will

continue to try to find the reason behind the frequent ruptures. In the meantime, the county will station an employee on the road 24 hours a day to improve the response time if there is another rupture. And the third break on March 25 accelerated county plans to build a bypass to the 755-foot section of pipe that will be replaced, she said. Until the bypass is complete, the county will limit traffic and prohibit parking on that stretch of Comanche Avenue because a parked sport utility vehicle was damaged in the recent break. In the first spill on September 12, 200,000 gallons of sewage poured into a small retention pond and then overflowed into Sweetwater Creek. Just one month later, 1.8 million gallons of sewage polluted the creek in an overnight break. On March 25, Water Resource Services estimated that 460,000 gallons flowed before the lines were shut down. That spill flowed for two hours like the March 28 break, the spokeswoman said.

Source: <http://www.tampabay.com/news/environment/water/article987978.ece>

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

17. *March 29, Hospital Review* – (National) **HHS releases \$338M in recovery act funds to community health centers.** The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced that it will release \$338 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to expand services at community health centers nationwide, according to an HHS news release. The funds, called Increased Demand for Service grants, will be distributed to 1,128 grantees to help create and retain around 6,400 jobs over the next two years, according to the release. Grantees submitted plans that explained how they planned to use the funds, including plans such as adding new providers, expanding hours of operations, or expanding services. According to the release, an additional 2.1 million patients will benefit from the grants over the next two years, including 1 million uninsured patients. This is the second set of grants released by the HHS under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Source: <http://www.hospitalreviewmagazine.com/news-and-analysis/business-and-financial/hhs-releases-338m-in-recovery-act-funds-to-community-health-centers.html>

18. *March 29, Honolulu Advertiser* – (Hawaii) **Hawaii working on list of who gets shots first in flu pandemic.** State health officials want the public's views on deciding who should get vaccinated — and who should not — against the next flu pandemic that reaches the Islands. So far, a wide-ranging advisory group of about a dozen community members representing religious groups, the chamber of commerce, and even an expert in mediation have been working to set up a system that will help determine who will be inoculated first and who will have to face the pandemic unarmed, at least until more vaccine can be manufactured and shipped to Hawaii. The final determination will rest with the governor. Hawaii's position as a gateway to and from Asia makes any potential pandemic of particular concern since air travel could quickly spread the disease. To guard against such problems, a disease surveillance and quarantine system was begun at Honolulu International Airport in 2005. It was the nation's first such system, and it screens sick passengers as they arrive for signs of serious illness. Hawaii and five other states have been chosen to participate in a federal program to carry out further pandemic planning.

Source:

<http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/20090329/NEWS15/903290374/1001>

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Government Facilities Sector

19. *March 30, KYPost.com* – (Kentucky) **Suspicious powder found at Covington IRS facility.** Police and hazardous materials crews spent more than two hours investigating a suspicious substance found at a Covington government building early on the morning of March 30. An employee at the Internal Revenue Service facility discovered a white powder around 2 a.m. and called police. Police, firefighters, and Boone County Hazardous Material crews responded to the scene to determine if the powder was dangerous. No one was injured in the incident, and emergency crews left the building around 4:30 a.m. Police have not yet released an update on what the powder turned out to be, but it seems to have been a false alarm. The incident remains under investigation. Source: http://www.kypost.com/news/local/story/Suspicious-Powder-Found-At-Covington-IRS-Facility/NoRm3Kth_0KHhgqETKwGDw.csp
20. *March 29, Associated Press* – (Georgia) **USS Alaska to be based in Georgia.** The USS Alaska will be based at the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base in Georgia in April after returning to duty following two years in a Norfolk, Virginia shipyard. The Trident nuclear sub will not return to Bangor in Washington State, the vessel's only port home since it was commissioned in 1986. A Kings Bay spokeswoman said submarine arrivals are classified, so she cannot say when the 560-foot nuclear submarine will arrive. Eight Ohio-class submarines are based at Kings Bay. One, the USS Tennessee, is in the Norfolk shipyards for refueling. The Camden County Chamber of Commerce estimates that 1,000 sailors and family members move to the area with each Ohio-class submarine. Source: http://www.seattlepi.com/local/6420ap_ga_sub_kings_bay.html?source=myspi
21. *March 27, TheSpectrum.com* – (Washington) **Squad dismantles birthday card.** An object that turned out to be a birthday card caused a scare at the 5th District Courthouse in St. George on March 26. Law enforcement agencies were called to the courthouse at about 9:30 a.m. when an envelope deemed suspicious was found inside the courthouse, said a deputy chief from the Washington County Sheriff's Office. The envelope was X-rayed through the machine at the courthouse entrance to see what was inside, and deputies observed what looked like a battery with wires coming out of it, he said. It was later determined it was likely a singing birthday card. The package was then destroyed in a controlled explosion. The court did not close during the incident. Source: <http://www.thespectrum.com/article/20090327/NEWS01/903270311>
22. *March 27, Virginian Pilot* – (Virginia; Florida) **Navy reaffirms carrier's Florida move.** The Navy is sticking with a plan to relocate a Norfolk-based aircraft carrier to Florida, the service's top spokesman said on March 25, despite another admiral's comments earlier in the day suggesting the decision might not be final. "Nothing has changed," said the rear admiral who serves as the service's chief of information. "The Navy remains committed to making Mayport a nuclear-carrier-capable homeport." At a

House subcommittee meeting earlier on March 25, a U.S. Representative from Norfolk pressed the rear admiral, who serves as the Navy's fleet readiness director, on a plan to spend an estimated \$671 million to upgrade facilities at Mayport to accommodate a nuclear carrier. The rear admiral in charge of readiness made it seem that the decision was still under review. But the Navy's chief of information said the Navy remains committed to Mayport as "a strategic dispersal alternative" for Atlantic Fleet carriers. All five of the ships currently are homeported in Norfolk; Navy officials worry they could be vulnerable to a natural disaster or terrorist attack. The Representative from Norfolk and others in Virginia's congressional delegation are fighting the planned move, which would shift jobs and money away from Hampton Roads. While Navy officials defend the plan, the Presidential Administration has agreed to review it.

Source: <http://www.military.com/news/article/March-2009/navy-reaffirms-carriers-florida-move.html?ESRC=topstories.RSS>

23. *March 27, Global Security Newswire* – (Kentucky) **Sarin disposal project completed at Kentucky plant.** All aspects of a small-scale sarin nerve agent disposal project at the Blue Grass Army Depot have been completed, the U.S. Army announced on March 26. Workers used a mobile system to chemically neutralize 160 gallons of warfare material stored in three bulk containers. The project began after a leak was found in one of the tanks. The containers themselves have been eliminated, while waste produced by the neutralization process was shipped to an incinerator in Texas.

Source: http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw_20090327_1361.php

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Emergency Services Sector

24. *March 28, Austin American Statesman* – (Texas) **Police arrest three suspected of stealing from patrol car.** Austin, Texas police have arrested three men suspected of stealing a shotgun and two other weapons from an unmarked police patrol car in Southwest Austin on March 26, a police spokeswoman said on March 28. The men's names were not released and it is unclear whether they have been charged with the crime. A police spokeswoman said officials believe the men who broke into an APD officer's car on the morning of March 26 are suspected of being linked to dozens of other burglaries of houses and vehicles throughout Austin. Police and FBI identification, along with police patches and a ballistic vest were also reported stolen. Police recovered all of the stolen items except for the shotgun.

Source: http://www.statesman.com/blogs/content/shared-gen/blogs/austin/blotter/entries/2009/03/28/police_arrest_three_suspected.html

25. *March 28, Dayton Daily News* – (Ohio) **Phone glitches hang over new Ohio 911 center.** Operations at a new 911 dispatch center experienced computer malfunctions and other problems that led to a 15-minute delay in responding to a house fire. On March 26, its first day of operations, the dispatch center had a glitch in a phone relay system that caused sporadic disruptions in 911 service to a large part of Montgomery County for nearly eight hours, investigators said. The Montgomery County Sheriff said it was unclear when the problem will be fixed. For now, emergency 911 calls are being

transferred to a backup center. The new center will continue to handle non-emergency calls. Workers from AT&T and Nortell were at the dispatch center on March 28 searching for what the sheriff said is a problem with some type of phone switch. The dispatch center received 14 emergency calls reporting a house fire on March 26 in Harrison Township, but only about half were answered by dispatchers.

Source: http://www.daytondailynews.com/n/content/gen/ap/OH_911_Malfunction.html

26. *March 27, Chronicle-Telegram* – (Ohio) **North Ridgeville police cruiser catches on fire.** A routine traffic stop turned into an intense ride for a North Ridgeville police officer and a man he had arrested when the officer's cruiser caught fire and was destroyed as they were en route to the police station. They were on their way back to the station when the patrolman smelled smoke. "He stopped to investigate, and when he opened the trunk, flames shot out. They went through two fire extinguishers and it wasn't doing the trick," the North Ridgeville police chief said. The patrolman got himself and his passenger out of the vehicle, and neither was injured. The incident occurred about 8:30 p.m. March 20. The blaze was put out by North Ridgeville firefighters, but not before the fire had swept through the vehicle. A 2007 Ford Crown Victoria Interceptor with nearly 25,000 miles, the cruiser was one of the newer vehicles in the department's 44-car fleet, according to the police chief. The fire appears to have resulted from a malfunction with the specially installed power pack used to operate the car's flasher lights. The unit did not appear to be malfunctioning during a recent check of power packs in all police vehicles. The loss is estimated to be nearly \$40,000, including \$27,000 for the car and more than \$10,000 in special equipment. The risk of the car's gas tank igniting and exploding was minimal, thanks to a specially treated shell encasing the gas tank.

Source: <http://www.chroniclet.com/2009/03/26/north-ridgeville-police-cruiser-catches-on-fire/>

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Information Technology

27. *March 30, IDG News Service* – (International) **GhostNet highlights evolving threat environment.** The high-profile disclosure recently of the GhostNet cyberespionage ring that targeted 1295 computers in more than 100 countries underscores how highly targeted and sophisticated attacks, often run by criminals, are changing the security landscape, according to a security researcher at Symantec. "How much is the landscape changing? It is changing drastically," said the vice president of research at Symantec Research Labs. GhostNet, documented in a report released on March 26 by the SecDev Group's Information Warfare Monitor and the Munk Center for International Studies at the University of Toronto, used malware and social engineering to give attackers full access to compromised computers. It also let attackers control the video cameras and microphones of these computers, letting them remotely monitor activity in the room where the computer was located. "It is another example of the sophistication of the types of attacks that are being put together," the vice president said. The highly targeted nature of GhostNet and similar attacks makes it difficult for antivirus vendors to respond quickly. "By the time we get a sample, it can be too late. They have already gone and

morphed into another variant,” the vice president said. “There is no end in sight.” While there has been a lot of speculation that GhostNet was developed and controlled by the Chinese government, criminal groups are just as likely to be responsible for these types of attacks.

Source:

http://www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/162178/ghostnet_highlights_evolving_threat_environment.html

28. *March 30, The Register* – (International) **Busted! Conficker’s tell-tale heart uncovered.** Security experts have made a breakthrough in their five-month battle against the Conficker worm, with the discovery that the malware leaves a fingerprint on infected machines which is easy to detect using a variety of off-the-shelf network scanners. The finding means that, for the first time, administrators around the world have easy-to-use tools to positively identify machines on their networks that are contaminated by the worm. As of March 30, signatures will be available for at least half a dozen network scanning programs, including the open-source Nmap, McAfee’s Foundstone Enterprise, and Nessus, made by Tenable Network Security. Up to now, there were only two ways to detect Conficker, and neither was easy. One was to monitor outbound connections for each computer on a network, an effort that had already proved difficult for organizations with machines that count into the hundreds of thousands or millions. With the advent of the Conficker C variant, traffic monitoring became a fruitless endeavor because the malware has been programmed to remain dormant until April 1. The only other method for identifying Conficker-infected computers was to individually scan each one, another measure that placed onerous requirements on admins. The discovery of Conficker’s tell-tale heart two days before activation may prove to be an ace up the sleeve of the white hat security world.

Source: http://www.channelregister.co.uk/2009/03/30/conficker_signature_discovery/

29. *March 30, PC World* – (International) **Adobe Reader, IE 7 holes under attack.** A zero-day flaw, a security hole with no fix available before attacks could be launched, exists in Adobe Reader and Acrobat, and can be exploited by a poisoned PDF file in an attempt to take over a vulnerable computer. As Symantec reported in February, crooks have hit the flaw with small-scale attacks that e-mail PDF attachments to specific targets. Adobe says a patch should be ready shortly for version 9 of both programs, with fixes for earlier versions to follow. Individuals went after a bug in Internet Explorer 7 a week after Microsoft distributed a fix. Those attacks employed a malicious Word document, but the Internet Storm Center has warned that crooks could also add hidden code to a hijacked Web site to create a drive-by download attack. A user can install the patch for this browser flaw via Automatic Updates, or the user can download it. The same patch batch from Microsoft addresses a security vulnerability in the company’s Visio diagramming software; an attack through this hole can be triggered if a user opens a hacked Visio file.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/27/AR2009032703426.html>

30. *March 28, PC World* – (International) **Search for ‘Conficker’ could lure virus.**

Symantec is warning Web users that searching for information on computer viruses such as Conficker could put them at risk of unintentionally downloading the virus on to their PC. Conficker targets a flaw in Windows Server and despite Microsoft releasing an emergency patch and urging all Web users to download it, many machines remain unprotected. According to the security vendor, searching for ‘conficker’ in a number of the Web’s most popular search engines brings up a number of hoax Web sites that actually host the virus and infect any users that navigate to the site. Symantec warns Web users the best course of action is to use software that will block Web pages such as these from being visited.

Source:

http://www.pcworld.com/article/162149/search_for_conficker_could_lure_virus.html

31. *March 27, Computerworld* – (International) **Hack contest sponsor confirms IE8 bug in final code.** The final version of Microsoft Corp.’s Internet Explorer 8 (IE8) does contain the vulnerability used to hack a preview of the browser at the recent Pwn2Own, the contest’s sponsor confirmed on March 28. But the exploit used by the computer science student to break the release candidate of IE8 will not work on the final version of IE8 as long as it is running in Windows Vista Service Pack 1 or Windows 7, said the manager of security response at 3Com Corp.’s TippingPoint unit. Questions had arisen about the exploitability of IE8 almost immediately after the Pwn2Own hack because the German student hacked IE8 Release Candidate 1 (RC1), while Microsoft released the final code less than 24 hours later. On March 27, the manager confirmed that IE8’s RTW, or “release to Web” portions, were immune from the hack. “His exploit did, in fact, employ the technique found by Sotirov and Dowd,” said the manager, referring to work by two researchers who announced last summer that they were able to bypass two of Vista’s biggest security defenses, ASLR (address space layout randomization) and DEP (data execution prevention). Microsoft made changes to IE8 between RC1 and the final code that blocked the circumvention technique, thereby making the exploit moot, but only in some situations, said the manager.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9130683&intsrc=news_ts_head

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

32. *March 30, Science Daily* – (National) **New material could lead to faster chips: Graphene may solve communications speed limit.** New research findings at the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) could lead to microchips that operate at much higher speeds than is possible with today's standard silicon chips, leading to cell phones and other communications systems that can transmit data much faster. The key to the superfast chips is the use of a material called graphene, a form of pure carbon that was first identified in 2004. Researchers at other institutions have already used the one-atom-thick layer of carbon atoms to make prototype transistors and other simple devices, but the latest MIT results could open up a range of new applications. The MIT researchers built an experimental graphene chip known as a frequency multiplier, meaning it is capable of taking an incoming electrical signal of a certain frequency — for example, the clock speed that determines how fast a computer chip can carry out its computations — and producing an output signal that is a multiple of that frequency. In this case, the MIT graphene chip can double the frequency of an electromagnetic signal. Frequency multipliers are widely used in radio communications and other applications. But existing systems require multiple components, produce “noisy” signals that require filtering, and consume large power, whereas the new graphene system has just a single transistor and produces, in a highly efficient manner, a clean output that needs no filtering.

Source: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/03/090324081443.htm>

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Commercial Facilities Sector

Nothing to report

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

Nothing to report

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Dams Sector

33. *March 29, Associated Press* – (North Dakota) **Fargo gets good news: flood waters appear to crest.** Fargo's fears of a catastrophic flood eased March 28 with word that the Red River apparently crested at lower-than-expected levels, and weary residents turned their attention to ensuring their hastily built levees hold up against an onslaught of ice-laden water expected to stay high for at least a week. A National Weather Service meteorologist said the Red River began receding the morning of March 28, surprising residents who were bracing for a crest on March 29. But the river can still fluctuate up to a foot and may remain at dangerous levels for a week, meaning people will still have to wait several days before they are completely safe. The weather service said the river crested around midnight at 40.82 feet. As of 2 p.m., it had dropped to around 40.61 feet, a significant shift from earlier forecasts that predicted the river would crest as high as 43 feet — the same level as the dikes protecting Fargo. The bloated Red River briefly

breached a dike early Sunday, pouring water into a school campus, and the mayor of Fargo called it a “wakeup call” for a city that needs to be vigilant for weaknesses in levees that could give way at any time. Crews managed to largely contain the flooding to the campus of Oak Grove Lutheran, preventing more widespread damage in nearby areas. To prevent additional dike breaches, officials planned to begin dropping one-ton sandbags from helicopters Sunday to deflect the violent current of the Red River and keep it from eroding vulnerable sections of the levees. The aerial effort also includes Air Force Predator drones used to watching water patterns from the air and help teams respond on the ground. It is the first time the drones have been used in a flood-fighting effort.

Source:

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hw95ek5Sllmi4SoQ_N4HJvwHE0ZAD977A1HG0

See also:

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hw95ek5Sllmi4SoQ_N4HJvwHE0ZAD977OIGN03

34. *March 28, Associated Press* – (North Dakota) **New water releases to help power, drinking water.** North Dakota’s Garrison Dam has resumed water releases, which should bolster Washburn’s drinking water supplies and help restart two power plants, an Army Corps of Engineers spokesman says. The dam ceased releasing water at mid-afternoon March 24 to help relieve flooding problems downstream at Bismarck. That flooding had eased by late March 26, and the dam began releasing 3,000 cubic feet of water per second at 8:30 p.m. March 26, a Corps spokesman said. Officials say an increase to 9,000 cubic feet per second of water from the Garrison Dam should help Washburn’s drinking water supply and the Army National Guard to restart two power plants. The flow increased to 6,000 cfs on the morning of March 27, and rose again to 9,000 cfs at 3:30 p.m. the same day, he said. The flow should be enough to bring the river’s level back up to the intake pipes at Washburn’s water treatment plant, he said.

Source:

http://www.startribune.com/local/42034227.html?elr=KArks:DCiUHc3E7_V_nDaycUiD3aPc: Yyc:aUU

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